

# Infant Feeding...6 to 12 Months

## Getting Started

Does it seem like your baby is growing so fast? She is getting bigger and learning new things every day! As your baby matures, she will start to eat more food. You might have some questions about how to feed your baby. This lesson should help answer some of those questions.

## Feeding Your Baby

When you feed your baby as soon as he is hungry, your baby learns to trust that his needs are being met. When you hold him close to you this helps him to feel secure and loved. As you feed your baby you learn how your actions comfort and satisfy him. This bond between you and your little one will give him a sense of caring and trust that will help you talk with him later in life too.

## 6-10 Months

Breastmilk is needed until your baby is at least one year of age. You can breastfeed as long as you and your baby want to after that! If you are not breastfeeding, iron-fortified formula is needed until your baby is one. Your baby has probably started infant cereal from the spoon by now too.

What foods can you offer after infant cereal?

-Fruits and vegetables, baby jar types

-You can also puree the fruits and vegetables you eat and feed them to your baby



If you puree the fruits and vegetables and make your own baby food, you will save money. When you make your own baby food, you do not need to add salt, spices, fat or sugar. If you do offer baby food from jars, buy "plain" foods, not fruit desserts, puddings, or mixed foods. You will get more for your money and less sugar this way! If you feed your baby beets, carrots, or spinach, buy the baby jar types for the first year.

As your baby grows and he becomes more skilled at eating, you can increase the thickness and lumpiness of foods a little at a time. Start with pureed foods and then offer ground foods. After your baby can handle those textures, you can fork mash her foods and then offer diced foods.

Wait 5-7 days before offering new foods. This helps to make sure your baby does not become sick from the new foods he is trying.

You may start to offer finger foods at this time. Some foods you might try are small strips of toast, bread, or teething biscuits.



## Adding Protein

Along with cereal, fruits and vegetables, at about eight months of age, your infant can start ground meats, beans and peas. As your baby gets older, she can progress to small, cut up pieces of meat and mashed beans and peas. She can have small servings of bread and pasta, yogurt, cottage

cheese and hard cheeses like cheddar. Your baby can also have some hard cooked egg yolk. Wait to give her the egg white until she is at least one year of age. Whole-wheat bread and mixed grain cereals can be given at this time too.

### What about fish?

Babies who are less than one year of age should not have any shellfish, such as shrimp, lobster, crab, crawfish, scallops, oysters, and clams. These fish can cause an allergic reaction. Also, do not feed your baby shark, swordfish, king mackerel, or tile fish. These fish have high levels of mercury that can make your baby sick.

### 10-12 Months

Your baby will continue to enjoy bite-sized pieces of food! He can have small pieces of whole grain bread, noodles, crackers and soft tortillas. You can also offer soft, cooked or ripe, peeled pieces of fruits and vegetables, and small slices of cheese. Do not give your baby honey, foods with honey in them, peanut butter or citrus fruits until after your baby is at least one year of age. The chart on the next page goes over what you have learned.



## Infant Daily Feeding Guide for Healthy Infants

Birth-4 Months	4-6 Months	6-8 Months	8-10 months	10-12 Months
<b>Breastfeed</b> 10 – 12 times per 24 hours in the first month	<b>Breastfeed</b> about 7- 9 times per 24 hours	<b>Breastfeed</b> about 4 – 6 times per 24 hours	<b>Breastfeed</b> 3 or more times per 24 hours	<b>Breastfeed</b> 3 or more times per 24 hours
<b>Breastfeed</b> 8 – 12 times per 24 hours in the 2 <sup>nd</sup> , 3 <sup>rd</sup> & 4 <sup>th</sup> month				
<b>If formula feeding:</b> at least 18 oz	<b>If formula feeding:</b> at least 24 oz	<b>If formula feeding:</b> at least 24 oz	<b>If formula feeding:</b> at least 24 oz	<b>If formula feeding:</b> at least 24 oz
*Feed according to your baby's signs of hunger and fullness!	*Feed according to your baby's signs of hunger and fullness!  Offer cup at 6 mo	* Feed according to your baby's signs of hunger and fullness!  Continue cup & begin bottle weaning	*Feed according to your baby's signs of hunger and fullness!  Continue cup and continue bottle weaning	*Feed according to your baby's signs of hunger and fullness!  Continue Cup & wean completely off bottle at 12 mo
<b>Cereal/ bread:</b> None	Start with 1-2 tsp. rice cereal. May increase to 2 Tbsp./day.	All Varieties at 4 – 6 Tbsp./day. 1 slice bread/toast.	All varieties at 4-6 Tbsp/day. Small servings of bread/toast.	Small servings (2 – 3) cereal, toast, rolls, bread, muffins.
<b>Juice:</b> None	None until 6 mo; 1-2 oz at 6 mo	Limit juice to 4-6 oz/day	Limit juice to 4-6 oz/day	Limit juice to 4-6 oz/day
<b>Vegetable:</b> None	None	3- 4 Tbsp/day	3- 4 Tbsp/day	3- 4 Tbsp/day
<b>Fruit:</b> None	None	3-4 Tbsp/day	3- 4 Tbsp/day	3- 4 Tbsp/day
<b>Meat/Protein:</b> None	None	None	1-3 Tbsp/day	1-3 Tbsp/day
<b>Water:</b> None	None until cereal is started; then a small amount to prevent hard bowels	Small amounts	Small amounts	Small amounts

## Eating tips

The chart you just reviewed will give you some guidelines as to what to feed your baby. Each baby is different...one will want to eat more; one might want to eat less. Your baby is the best person to let you know when she wants more and when she is full! If you watch the cues she gives you, you will feed her the right amounts of food (including breastmilk and formula). It is important to feed your baby at the first sign of hunger. Stop feeding at the first sign of fullness. Feeding this way will ensure she learns to know her own hunger and fullness cues. This will help her maintain a healthy weight!

### Here are some signs that your baby is hungry:

- Hands to mouth activity
- Fussiness
- Closed fists
- Shows interest in food
- Opens mouth and leans forward when he sees food
- Crying is a late sign of hunger (Don't wait until this sign to feed your baby).

### Here are some signs that your baby is full:

- Turning the head away
- Closing the mouth
- Open hands
- Shows interest in things other than eating

## A word about choking

Always watch your baby while she eats so you can help her if she begins to choke. Make sure foods are soft and cut in small pieces. Avoid eating foods that are easy to choke on, such as:

- Raw vegetables (including green peas, string beans, celery, carrots)
- Cooked or raw whole corn kernels
- Whole pieces of canned fruit
- Hard pieces of raw fruit such as apple, pear, and melon
- Whole grapes, berries, cherries, melon balls, or cherry and grape tomatoes (cut these foods into quarters, with pits removed, before feeding to older babies)
- Uncooked dried fruit (including raisins)
- Hot dogs
- Peanuts and nuts
- Hard candies

## What about the bottle?

If your baby uses a bottle, you should start weaning him to the cup at 6 months of age. He should be off of the bottle at one year of age. Giving the bottle past one year or putting juice in the bottle can cause your baby's teeth to decay. This will cause your infant pain and he will have to see the dentist. If your baby is having a hard time giving the bottle up, put plain water in it.

## Activity!

Just as being active is important for your health, your baby needs to be active too. If your baby is sitting in her stroller, play pen, or car/infant seat for hours at a time, her ability to roll over, crawl, or walk might be delayed. It also might affect her brain growth. Some ideas to help your baby be active include playing peekaboo and pat-a-cake. You can hold your baby, rock her and carry her to new places too.

Here are 5 simple steps to help your baby be active:

1. Play with your baby, talk to your baby, and help him explore what is around him.
2. Your baby should be placed in safe settings where she can move her arms and legs freely. Her movement should not be restricted for a long time.
3. Your baby's activity should help him develop his movement skills.
4. Your baby should always be in a safe place, so when she walks or crawls she is not in danger.
5. Help your baby move! It is up to you as a parent to play with your baby and help her learn to move her body.

We hope you enjoyed this lesson on infant feeding!

Please answer the following questions. When you are done, give this sheet to your WIC teacher. If you have other questions about this lesson, ask your WIC teacher.  
Thank you!



1. Why is it important to feed your baby as soon as he/she shows signs of hunger and stop feeding when baby show signs of fullness?
2. Name one food that should not be offered until your baby is at least one year of age.
3. List two foods that could choke your baby.
4. Name something new you learned from this lesson.

## References

1. "Let's Eat". Utah WIC Program. July 2004.
2. Feeding Infants. A Guide for Use in the Child Nutrition Programs.  
[www.fns.usda.gov/tn/Resources/feeding\\_infants.html](http://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/Resources/feeding_infants.html)
3. Bright Futures in Practice: Nutrition (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.) (2002)  
[www.brightfutures.org/nutrition/resources.html](http://www.brightfutures.org/nutrition/resources.html)
4. "Infant Daily Feeding Guide for Healthy Infants. A Year at a Glance-Birth to 12 Months of Age". Utah WIC Program. February 2005.
4. NASPE Releases First Ever Physical Activity Guidelines for Infants and Toddlers.  
[www.aahperd.org/naspe/template.cfm?template=toddlers.html](http://www.aahperd.org/naspe/template.cfm?template=toddlers.html).